

William (Bill) Kennedy Jr., president of Redex Industries, the manufacturer of Udderly Smooth creams and moisturizers, speaks at Youngstown State University's Spring Commencement 1 p.m. Saturday, May 7, in Stambaugh Stadium on campus.

Kennedy, who graduated from YSU in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering, receives an honorary Doctor of Science degree at the ceremony.

In 1978, Kennedy's parents, William and Marg, purchased the Animal Health manufacturing division of Universal Coop and founded Redex Industries Inc., the makers of Udderly Smooth skin care products. Redex remains operated by three generations of the Kennedy family, all which are YSU graduates, and distributes products sold throughout the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Brazil, Australia, Hong Kong and South Korea.

Udderly Smooth was originally developed to aid dairy farmers, but it worked so well that it catapulted from the barnyard to a moisturizer for everyday use. The Kennedy family and Redex has provided shipments of Udderly Smooth to areas of need and disaster, including to overseas troops in the Middle East, the Red Cross, NBC Holiday Gift Drive, City of Hope, Cancer Centers and clinics across the United States and Operation Gratitude.

Kennedy was inducted into the Ohio Commodores in 2007 and currently serves as regional director for District II. Members of the Ohio Commodores are appointed by the governor of Ohio in recognition of outstanding contributions to the economic development of the state. Kennedy was recognized as a YSU STEM Outstanding Alumni in 2014. He also serves on the board for the CASTLO Community in Struthers, Ohio.

He and his wife, Diana, enjoy helping in the community, including Panerathon, Mahoning County Veteran food distributions and Golden String events.